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[Daniel Defoe]
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ATTEMPT
TOWARDS A
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COALITION
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English Protestants,

From the *Weakness* of the *Pretensions*
of the several PARTIES, for being ei-
ther *Better Christians*, or *Better Subjects*,
upon any *Principles* wherein they differ.

To which is added,

Reasons for Restraining
THE
LICENTIOUSNESS
OF THE
Pulpit and Press.

L O N D O N
Printed, and Sold by J. Roberts, in Warwick-
Lane. 1715. (Price Six-Pence.)
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LICENTIATION

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LONDON

Printed and Sold by J. Roberts, in Warwick-
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A N
A T T E M P T
 TOWARDS A
Coalition, &c.



H E R E is nothing can
 rejoyce a true Patriot
 more, than when he
 views the Prosperity of
 his native Country, and
 sees the kindly Fruits of
 Peace flourish in the
 Breasts of his Fellow-
 Subjects. — A sure and certain Indication of
 a Blessing from Above, on all their Labours
 and Endeavours here below.

Whether it be in time of War, or during
 the profoundest Peace, an Union of Hearts
 A 2 and

and Hands, will make us more capable of carrying on the former to our Advantage, and to reap the Fruits of the latter to our Joy and Satisfaction.

History is full of Examples of this kind; of Kingdoms ruin'd and undone; of Nations depopulated, who in former Ages made a considerable Figure in the World, and might have flourish'd at this time, had it not been for those Civil Feuds and intestine Divisions, which corroded the Vitals of the Constitution, and in Time threw them into such a dangerous Consumption, out of which they could never be recover'd.

To descend to Particulars, would be too tedious, as well as foreign to my present purpose, which is, to be as Explicit as may be, and to Argue as closely as the Subject will allow.

There is nothing could please a true *Briton* more, than to view that unanimity of Temper, which seem'd to explain it self in the Gestures and joyful Acclamations of all Sorts and Degrees of People, both *High* and *Low*, at the late solemn Procession of His most Sacred Majesty King *GEORGE*, thro' his loyal City of *London*. A Day never to be forgotten by those who have a Value for the Liberties of their Country, or for their own private Interest, in securing their Properties from the Lust and Tyranny of a merciless, tho' now (thank Heaven) an impotent Invader.

And

And it wou'd be a great Pity, and matter of Lamentation, that ever such a Junction of Hearts and Hands, should be laid aside, or suffer'd to grow cold, as appear'd at the Solemnization of that glorious Day.

I am in hopes my Countrymen have such a true Sense of their own Interest, and such a deep Regard to the Prosperity of their Fellow-Subjects in general, as not to let slip any Opportunity of improving the same to their own Advantage, as well as that of their native Country.

Peace at Home will enable us to conquer all Difficulties ; it will put us into a Condition not only to withstand *Arbitrary Power* at Home, but also to hold the *Ballance of Power* in our own Hands, and give due Bounds to aspiring Nations Abroad.

But, without this, if we once lose this blessed Opportunity, in vain are all our Fleets, in vain are all our Forces ; if we fall short of this Blessing, now Heaven has once more put a Prize into our Hands, who knows but the Almighty may pursue us till our Names shall be cut off from the Earth, and the Memory of an *Englishman* be forgotten in future Ages ?

In order to accomplish this great End, there are Three Things particularly necessary, the First is,

1st. *Let us not reflect on one another for past Miscarriages.* If any Party, or all Parties,

ties, have done amiss (as I believe, if Accounts were fairly stated, the Ballance would be pretty even on both sides) let it be forgot and forgiven. Let us all endeavour to behave our selves better for the future, that our Posterity may have Reason to say, *We have sufficiently atton'd for past Errors.*

Have any Party among us, been guilty of, or any ways cherish'd, Notions tending to *Rebellion* ? Let them, in a particular manner, labour to shew themselves the most Dutiful and Loyal Subjects to his *present Majesty.*

Have any Party among us been guilty of Ingratitude to the best of *former* Princes ? Let them in a peculiar manner, endeavour to shew the highest Tokens of Gratitude to our *present* Sovereign King *GEORGE.*

This, and this only, is the Way to cultivate Peace among our selves. This is the surest and concisest Method to make the Crown sit easy on his Head, whom GOD and the People have chosen to Reign over us.

This is the Way to secure our own Liberties, and hand down to Posterity such an Example which after-Ages shall be proud to imitate.

This is the only Means to secure, what should be most dear to us, our Holy Religion. And further, this will give us such a Character abroad, that may enable us to uphold our Fellow-Christians of the same Profession

feſſion in Foreign Countries, from the Inſults of their implacable Enemies, and thoſe whole Ambition it is to root out the *Northern Heresy*, as they virulently term it.

To meditate upon former Evils; to be continually reflecting on one another for paſt Miſcarriages; to rake into old Grievances, will be ſo far from ſtopping up the Breach of our Diviſions, that it only ſerves to keep the Wound open to Eternity, and give our Enemies ſuch an Advantage over us, which at laſt it will be impoſſible for us to withſtand.

Peace at Home will be as a brazen Wall of Defence to us on every ſide; whiſt, on the other Hand, intestine Jars and civil Feuds lay us open to the Power of every merciless Invader.

To accompliſh this great Work, to carry it to the higheſt Perfection, it is not a Pin matter whether a Man is a *Church-Man*, or a *Difſenter*; the Peace of the Nation may be ſecur'd by the one, as well as the other.

A *Difſenter* may be as good a Statesman as a *Church-Man*; and a *Church-Man* may be (and I wiſh I could ſay, have not too often prov'd) as great a *Knave* as a *Difſenter*.

Politicks (ſtrictly conſider'd) have nothing to do with *Religion*; an *Atheiſt* may be as good, nay a better *Politician* than the greateſt *Devotee*.

Politicks

Politicks only respect this World and the Government thereof. — *Religion* leads us to another, and the enjoyment of eternal Life, and a Man may manage the Affairs of the former, tho' he has no regard to the latter.

A Man, tho' an Atheist, may have such a regard for his own Interest, for the Good of his Country, the Prosperity of his Friends and Relations, the future Felicity of his Posterity, or for the Service of his Sovereign, out of a Principle of Morality, as Honour, Justice, or the like, tho' at the same time he has no regard to the Growth and Being of Religion.

Whilst on the other Hand, a religious Man is so wrapt up with the Thought of his Soul's Good, and is taken with the Beatitude of those Joys he seeks after, that as he meditates frequently on the one, so he seldom troubles himself to follow the Cares and Disquietudes of the other, with that Assiduity which a worldly Man will certainly do. *The Children of this World are Wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light*, says the World's great Saviour. In things respecting themselves, and their worldly Interest, they are allow'd to be the Wifest.

Not that I am any ways Arguing for the Employing such in general, who are vicious in their Lives, or remiss in Religion; but all that I would have my Countrymen infer from hence, is, That *Politicks* and *Religion* are Two different Things, and may
subsist

subsist distinctly of themselves. Were it not so, the Lord have Mercy on several of our Late as well as Former Statesmen.

If Religion was absolutely necessary to form a Politician; if a Statesman must be a Divine in his Practice, as well as a Politician in his Judgment; if it is absolutely necessary it should be so; if the Happiness and Well-Being of a Kingdom consisted in that only, how long ago had we been a Heap of Rubbish, and made the Contempt of Mankind?

But I am fully sensible where the Shoe pinches; 'tis not the *Atheist* or the *Deist*, the vicious and prophane Person, that these Gentlemen rail against, but the *Dissenter*.

And pray, Gentlemen, why are you so angry at the *Dissenters*? What great Crimes have they been guilty of? What have they done, that they alone should be debarr'd the Liberties which every *Englishman* claims by Birth and Merit.

They have freely paid their Money to the Government, and very largely contributed to make good your Funds; and yet some People are unwilling to grant them the least Return, no not so much as a Place of 50 l. a Year Profit from the Government.

You press them for Soldiers in the Army, and Sailors to Man your Fleets, and yet, let them behave themselves never so well, you wou'd have it be impossible for them ever to arrive to the Heighth of a Lieutenant's Commission,

mission, tho' at the same Time an Atheist may be made a Colonel of a Regiment, or an Admiral of a Squadron.

This is such a Paradox in Politicks, that the *British* Nation ought to blush at; that the Man of Religion should be debarr'd from Sharing those Honours which the Debauchee of no Religion may easily arrive to.

Certainly those Gentlemen who have been so Impolitick as to promote such a Piece of Disservice to their Native Country, and such a Disregard to their Fellow-Subjects, must have had something else in View than to serve their Prince or Country either.

To take away, or any ways lessen the Rights of any Party, or Body of Men, who as to Birth and Temporal Qualifications, have as much Claim to them as their Neighbours, is no less than a Breach of the Nation's Peace, Undermining the Constitution, and opening a Way for our Enemies to insult over us, and invade us, by putting it out of the Power of so vast a Body of Men as the *Dissenters*, either to act in their own, or the Nation's Defence.

This is taking a defensive Weapon out of the Hands of our Countrymen, in Order to furnish our Enemies with offensive ones to destroy us.

This is a Hardship so very singular, and at the same Time so barbarous and ungrateful, that certainly no true *Briton* that has a real

real Love for the Prosperity of his Country, can ever consent to.

The Safety of a Government consists in the Strength and Wealth of its Inhabitants; but can it consist with Reason, that the Disarming or Incapacitating half the Inhabitants of a Nation, can promote its Security, and render it more impregnable than before? Can any Thing be more preposterous? Any Thing more ridiculous than this?

'Tis upon this account that I would advise my Countrymen who are of a different Party, and yet desirous to see their native Country flourish in Prosperity, that they would have some Regard to the Civil Rights of their Fellow Subjects.

Civil Liberty is *communis omnibus*, alike to all; we are all *Englishmen*, if we are not all Church of *England* Men; and we do, or at least ought to enjoy our Civil Rights, in a Civil (if not Religious) Capacity.

I cannot in Reason and Justice pass over this Head without saying something to the *Dissenters*. They have often (and that not without reason neither) made frequent Complaints of Persecution for their Dissent: What their Behaviour has been to merit such Usage, or who were the Instruments that promoted it, I shall not determine; but they may assure themselves, that whenever they suffer'd under the Persecutions they mention, it was not from the Church of *England* as a Church of Christ.

What some of her pretended hot-headed Members may have done, ought not to be charged on her, because she has often disclaim'd that Notion as contrary to her Principles.

And more particularly the House of Commons in 1710 asserted it as contrary to her Principle, in the Preamble to the *Occasional Bill* then on foot,

Every Church of Christ ought to follow the great Example of him, her Lord and Master; and whilst the Church of *England* remains, or declares her self to be such a Church, she can neither dictate or countenance any such Doctrine so contrary to her own Principles, and that of her Primitive Founders.

If the *Dissenters* have suffer'd any Thing of this Nature from some of her pretended Members, they ought not, in Justice, to charge it on the whole Body, nor to stigmatize the Church with a Principle that she always abhorr'd.

We are, or may be, sensible enough that there are several learned Divines of the Church of *England*, who utterly disclaim all Proceedings of that Nature, and have always behav'd themselves with a tender Regard to the Civil as well as Religious Liberties of the *Dissenters*.

And therefore, if it were only out of respect to such true and worthy Patriots, as well as sincerely pious Christians, the
Dissenters

Dissenters ought to forgive and forget all past Hardships, and unanimously joyn in reconciling our National Differences.

To be debarr'd the Rights of *Englishmen* in a Civil Capacity, is what they do also object; but I know of none who have promoted such a preposterous and false Step, but those whose Actions have too plainly declar'd, that they have had other Designs in View than Placing the House of *Hanover* on the Throne of *Great Britain*.

But since, by the peculiar Favour of Heaven, King *George* is plac'd on the Throne, we ought to second that good Providence, by resolving to lay aside all Distinctions but that of the *Protestant* Religion, and the present King, as Defender of it; or *Popish* Principles, and the *Pretender*, with a *French* Tyrant at the Head of them both; and 'tis incumbent on the *Dissenters*, that they do use their Endeavours towards the Continuance of so great a Blessing.

One Means to accomplish this great End, is (as I have already shown you) not to reflect on one another for past Miscarriages; and this indeed is the grand *Remora* that for these several Years has rather widen'd and fomented, than any ways heal'd our Breaches.

Another Expediency for the Accomplishing of this great Work, is

2dly, *To restrain the Licentiousness of the Pulpit, I mean, as to Political Preaching.*

The Clergy who, by the Dignity of their Vocation, are properly call'd the Shepherds or Leaders of the People in their Way to Heaven, have some of them, of late Years, too much neglected the Means necessary to that great End; and instead thereof have instill'd into their Hearers Minds high and exalted Notions of themselves, as if they were the God Almighty they ought to adore, or else have preach'd up such a blind Obedience and Submission to their Prince, as if Heaven were only to be obtain'd in that Way.

They have made the Prince a God on Earth, in respect to the poor People, tho' at the same Time they have taken all the Care imaginable, to place themselves far above him.

Their Discourses of late Years have been generally more fill'd with the Spirit of Rancour, Rage, and Malice, than with Divine Truths and Practical Christianity. They seem more fond to be thought *State-Politicians* than pious *Clergy-men*; as if the *Politics of Government* were to be practis'd by their Auditors with more Vehemence and Ardour than the *Doctrines of the Gospel*.

What a Disturbance did that insignificant Sermon of Dr. *Sach* ———/s make? What

For-

Fermentations follow'd upon it? What Provocations? What Disputations? What Rage, Envy, and Malice, possess'd the Minds of most Men against their Neighbours, which is not totally eradicated to this Day? Were not the Injunctions of our Saviour trodden under Foot, and the Primitive Doctrines of Christianity, like a Nose of Wax, twisted every Way to serve a Turn? Where was then that Charity, that Brotherly Love so often recommended by Christ and his Apostles, were they not totally abolish'd to make room for a quite contrary Spirit? How many Families were divided? Father against Son, and Son against Father: And yet some mis-led weak-headed Gentlemen are apt to cry up this dull Tool for an able Divine, and his Sermon as the best that ever was preach'd. A certain and sure Indication how naturally we are prone to receive the Dictates of *Satan*, which lead to Destruction, rather than the Doctrines of our Saviour, which are our only Guide to eternal Life.

And if we do but consider the Tendency of that Sermon by its Effects, we shall find that a Spirit quite contrary to that of Christianity attended it, with all the dismal Consequences that could be.

Some of the rest of the Clergy, animated by the Success of the aforementioned *Boute-feu*, soon laid hold of the Opportunity of Bullying People into the Notions of Slavery, at the same Time Cajoling their Sovereign

reign till Time shou'd offer them an Opportunity to get into the Saddle.

Politicks in the Pulpit is like Fire amongst Flax, it soon blazes, and sets whole Kingdoms on a Flame.

The *Dutch*, who are reckon'd to be as Politick a People as any in the World, soon found what ill Consequences this Evil would lead them into, and therefore wisely provided against it, by Silencing the Man that durst presume to meddle with the Government of their State.

And if some such Methods were taken here, I dare say, it would prevent a great deal of ill Blood; and put an effectual Stop to that Pride, Malice, and Envy which now reigns among us.

As long as the Measures of our Obedience are bounded by good and wholesome Laws, I can see no Reason why an hot-headed Clergy-man shou'd take upon him to stretch our Obedience beyond them. Are our Parliaments of so little Authority, that we must rely so much on the Gentlemen of the black Gown?

Let us then give up our Laws, lay aside Parliaments, and wholly rely on our Learned Convocation for what necessary Orders and wise Injunctions they shall be pleas'd to grant us.

'Tis plain enough to be seen by their Behaviour to their own Spiritual Superiors, how little Regard they have to what they preach,

preach, and how far short they are in the Practice of that which they would have others perform.

Can any Man be so shallow to imagine that a Clergyman who cannot submit to his Diocesan in a Matter that concerns the Truths of Christianity, would behave himself with more Respect to his Prince in matters of less Concern, and where only Temporals are concerned?

It has but too often been seen, and I am afraid will continue to be so, if some timely Stop be not put to this growing Evil, that the Clergy are generally very forward to have their Auditors made Slaves of, and, like Cowards as they are, set other Folks together by the Ears, whilst they themselves stand behind the Curtain, and laugh at them.

Were we to make a general Search into the History of Sedition, no doubt but we should find a Clergyman at the Head of them.

Who more proper, who more ready, who more capable of Firing People's Minds with the Notion of Rebellion, than an hot-headed Priest?

Not that I intend this (nor would have any one think so) as a Reflection on the Church of *England*, or Dissenting Clergy; for, on the contrary, I am very well assured most of their Divines are Men of Orthodox Principles, Pious and Learned Education, and

Promoters of a quite contrary Doctrine than that of Sedition.

But as I was saying before, a little more *Divinity*, and less *Politicks* in their Sermons, would better become the Ministers of both Parties. The Doctrines of Christianity are *Peace, Love, and Unity*, and whatsoever is contrary to this, must certainly be of the Devil. And they that by their malicious Insinuations, rash Expressions, and uncharitable Reflections, give such gross Offence to their fellow Christians, are more like the Servants of Hell, than the Ambassadors of Heaven. They too plainly prove themselves the *Messengers of Satan*, and not the *Ministers of Jesus Christ*.

'Tis an easy matter for any one to foretel, (without the Gift of Prophecy) that if some Stop be not speedily put to this *Political Preaching*, Religion will soon be kick'd out of Doors. For by this Method, Subjects may be made Slaves, but they can never be made pious Christians.

What Business has a *Divine* to meddle with that in the *Pulpit* which the *Laws* have already determin'd ?

Our *Laws*, in that Case, are founded not only on the strictest *Justice*, but also on *Scripture*, and are so plain and explicit, that he that runs may read them.

The *Scriptures* indeed, in many places, are somewhat obscure and hard to be understood, and therefore ought to be explain'd as
far

far as Man can go ; but the *Laws* are so plain and open, that every *Plow man* may understand how far he ought to Obey his Prince ; and therefore they need not the Assistance of our *Divines* to explain them.

Every Subject knows the Measure of his Obedience to the Higher Powers, and the Peril that attends his Non-performance ; so that 'tis altogether unnecessary and needless for a Divine to meddle with that which belongs not to his Sphere.

If there be any thing in our *Laws* that need Explanation, there are proper Judges to determin it between the King and the Subject ; and so in like manner, if we find any thing in Scripture too deep for our Apprehensions, we have *Divines* to consult. So that for a *Lawyer* to meddle with *Divinity*, would look very absurd ; and for a *Divine* to meddle with *Politicks*, is as absurd ; and they may as well set up for Pleading at the Bar, as Preaching in the Pulpit.

If these things are suffer'd a little longer, People may as well go to *Westminster-Hall*, to hear *Causes*, as go to some of our *Churches* to hear *Sermons*. They may learn as much *Honesty* at the one, as the other, and I am afraid, almost as much *Divinity* too. Nay, the *Lawyer*, of the Two, is the *honestest*, for he keeps to his Text, he sticks to his Profession, whilst the other, like a *blazing Comet*, bursting beyond its Orb, sets Fire on all the World about him.

I had not dwelt so long on this Head, but that I thought it absolutely necessary to search into the Foundation of our Mischiefs; and unless we undermine that, 'tis in vain to endeavour to reconcile the Differences of the Nation.

Nor am I writing a *Satyr* against Religion, or its Ministers, (God forbid I should do that) but like an honest and true *Briton*, and a faithful Lover of my native Country, I have represented this, as it really is, one fundamental Cause of our national Differences.

Political Preaching must be restrain'd, unless we have a mind to run the Risque of our Religion, unless we have a mind to put our Consciences at Stake, and for some temporal Advantages, forego the Happiness of immortal Bliss, and the Blessings of that State, where every thing will contribute to our eternal Welfare.

If I am any ways wrong in my Judgment, I should be heartily glad to have better Information; and always willing to receive such Conviction, as is agreeable to Reason and good Manners.

I do not say, this is the *only*, tho' it is one of the *chiefest* Causes, there is another Evil not much less dangerous than this, which requires a necessary and speedy Redress, and that is,

3dly, The

3dly, *The Licentiousness of the Press.*

The *Paper Wars* that have of late been so industriously carry'd on amongst us, serve only further to inflame the Minds of the People. As *Political Preaching* kindles the Flame, so *Political Papers* serve to keep the Fire still burning, like the *Vestals* of old, never to be extinguish'd.

When the *Parson* has done his Argument in the *Pulpit*, down it is handed to the *Coffee-House*, from thence into *private Families*, and so on, 'till the whole Nation is inflam'd, *Argumentative Papers*, like wild-Fire, are apt to take hold on weak Heads, who generally espouse such Papers as are of their own Party, without hearing what the other Side has to say.— So that let there be never so many Errors, let there be never such false *Logick*, a Man can never be convinc'd. Whereas, if those Papers were discontinu'd, every one would be left to his own Reflections, and not rely on the Judgment of he knows not who, for the Measures of his Obedience to his Prince, or the Right he has to his own Property.

The Distinctions of *High-Church* and *Low*, of *Whig* and *Tory*, had never been carry'd on to so great a Height, if People had not been irritated against one another, by *Sermons* on the one side, and *Pamphlets* on the other.

I know some Gentlemen will be apt to object, *That if you restrain the Press, the Liberty of the Subject will be lessen'd.*

I must confess this Objection is of great Weight with me, because I am as tender of the Subject's Liberty, as any Man living; but in this Case, I must make use of a Practice in Surgery, viz. *To cut off one Member, rather than the whole Body should be infected.* I should much rather part with one small Branch of our Liberty, rather than endanger the Whole.

If we do not put a Stop to this growing Evil, our Posterity may live to Curse their Progenitors, for entailing on them the Poison of national Feuds, and intestine Divisions.

But at the same Time, by *restraining the Licentiousness of the Press*, I am not for debarring any one from the Liberty of Writing, nor am I for imposing a *Licenser*, who generally Countenances one Party more than another; but what I aim at, is to Suppress all *argumentative Papers* in a *Political Way*.

Such Arguments are certainly very dangerous, and quite opposite to the Peace of the Government, because they only serve to inflame the Minds of the People, not to convince them: For, as I said before, every Man is apt to espouse the Papers of his own Party, and over-look, or wholly lay aside the other.

I could rather Wish, that every private Subject might have the Liberty of laying
their

their Opinions before the *Parliament*, than appeal to the People. As they are the Nation's Representatives, and are, (or at least ought to be) the wisest of the People, they are the properest Judges in such Cases. But as it is not my Place, so it is not my Intention to Dictate to my Superiors.

There is nothing prevails more with the Weakness of some People's Brain, than what is deliver'd to them from the Press by a Hand of whose Qualifications they have already rivetted an Opinion in themselves.

Nay, a Man of an ordinary Capacity, when once set up for an Author, if he does but get the good Will of his Party, may run as great a Length this way, as the most florid Writer in the World. And of the Two, such Men are the most dangerous, being provok'd by the Itch of Writing, and the seeming Honour of popular Applause, they never value what Course they take, or what they Write, provided they can but gain the Vogue of the People.

(num

*Aude aliquid brevibus, Gyaris aut Carcere dignum
Si vis esse aliquid*——

Is a constant Maxim with them not to be despis'd. — They neither value the Displeasure of the Government, nor the Punishment that the Law inflicts on Delinquents. 'Tis popular Applause only that they aim at, and they are resolute in gaining it at any Rate.

And

And no doubt there are some Gentlemen in the World, who will be apt to charge me with the same Crime; but if such Gentlemen will but judge of my Intentions by the Course and Tendency of my Writing, they may easily perceive that I am rather like *Ishmael* of old, my *Hand is against every Man*, and therefore consequently, *every Body must be against me*. I blame no Party, tho' at the same time, I admonish all; I am for *reconciling*, not *increasing* the Differences of the Nation.

'Tis my firm Belief, that both Sides have done amiss in their turns; not a Party of Men among us, but what have been equally guilty; and if once the Nation cou'd come to own this, it would certainly be a great Step towards closing those Breaches that have so long been open'd among us.

We are continually charging one another with Crimes that we were never guilty of: We still make Reflections without Reason, and build up a Man of Straw, some *Scare-Crow* of our own contrivance, and then fall about him with all the Vehemency imaginable, without the least respect to Persons, good Manners, or Decency.

The *High-Church* Party have for these Fifty Years past, continually teaz'd the *Dis-senters* with *Forty-One*.— If ever they were vanquish'd in Argument, or overcome by Superiority of Sense, with a front of Assurance, equal to the rest of their Writings, they introduce

introduc'd the weak Reflection of *Rebellion*,
and then, like a parcel of Mad-men, throw
up their Caps, and cry'd, *Exhoris* as the old
word. Had I as many things to say as this

On the other Hand, the *Dissenters* in de-
fence of themselves, have not fear'd to charge
the Church with *Persecution*, during the long
Reign of King Charles the Second, whose
backwardness in Religion and forwardness to
encourage *licentious Debauchery*, gave too
great a Handle of *Suspicion*, that he favour'd
those Persons who took a Delight in perfi-
curing their Fellow-Christians.

But why, Gentlemen, must we have all
this Noise about *Forty-One*? Why so many
Repetitions? Were any of the *Dissenters*
of this Generation, then alive, that they need
to be charg'd with it?

That may be, Sir, says a High Church-
man, but their damn'd Janatical Presbyterian
Principles are still the same.

In order to Answer such a virulent Obje-
ctor, 'tis sufficient to say, That as the Pres-
byterian Principles, as to the Fundamental
Matters of Religion, are the same with the
Church of England, so they deny not to Sub-
scribe to all their Articles, except those con-
cerning *Episcopacy* and the *Ceremonies*. And
therefore the Church of England (in their
Principles of Religion) are equally guilty of
entertaining Notions tending to *Rebellion*
with the Presbyterians.

Do not both sides
If

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'Tis my firm Belief, that both Sides have done amiss in their turns; not a Party of Men among us, but what have been equally guilty; and if once the Nation cou'd come to own this, it would certainly be a great Step towards closing those Breaches that have so long been open'd among us.

We are continually charging one another with Crimes that we were never guilty of: We still make Reflections without Reason, and build up a Man of Straw, some *Scare-Crow* of our own contrivance, and then fall about him with all the Vehemency imaginable, without the least respect to Persons, good Manners, or Decency.

The *High-Church* Party have for these Fifty Years past, continually teaz'd the *Dis-senters* with *Forty-One*.— If ever they were vanquish'd in Argument, or overcome by Superiority of Sense, with a front of Assurance, equal to the rest of their Writings, they introduce

introduc'd the weak Reflection of Rebellion, and then, like a parcel of Mad-men, throw up their Caps, and cry'd, *Victoria*.

On the other Hand, the Dissenters in defence of themselves, have not spar'd to charge the Church with Persecution, during the long Reign of King Charles the Second, whose backwardness in Religion, and forwardness to encourage licentious Debauchery, gave too great a Handle of Suspicion, that he favour'd those Persons who took a Delight in persecuting their Fellow-Christians.

But why, Gentlemen, must we have all this Noise about *Forty-One*? Why so many Repetitions? Were any of the Dissenters of this Generation, then alive, that they need to be charg'd with it?

That may be, Sir, says a High Churchman, but their damn'd fanatical Presbyterian Principles are still the same.

In order to Answer such a virulent Objector, 'tis sufficient to say, That as the Presbyterian Principles, as to the Fundamental Matters of Religion, are the same with the Church of England, so they deny not to Subscribe to all their Articles, except those concerning *Episcopacy* and the *Ceremonies*. And therefore the Church of England (in their Principles of Religion) are equally guilty of entertaining Notions tending to Rebellion with the Presbyterians.

D

If

no less they charge this Crime upon them as
 upon their Political Principles, that also is as false
 as the other, because not only their own In-
 terest is directly against it, as I shall shew
 more largely by and by, but the impossi-
 bility of ever attaining their Ends, were their
 Principles ever so unmonarchical, is an ef-
 fectual Bar to them from ever attempting
 such a ridiculous Enterprize.
 There are so many Sects among the Dis-
 senters, and consequently so many different
 Interests, that 'tis altogether impossible for
 any one Party among 'em to establish any Kind
 of Model of Government, different from
 what they now enjoy. And I dare say, were
 it put to the Vote, there is not One Dis-
 senter in Ten (I mean Men of Understanding)
 but what would willingly Subscribe to the
 Church of England's Regency, provided they
 might be us'd as Englishmen and Fellow-
 Christians, in being admitted into some Share
 of profitable Places, as well as those who pay
 less Money to The Government than they
 do.
 The business of Forty-One is nothing to
 the present Dissenters; they are clear from
 the Charge, because innocent of the Crime.
 And, on the other hand, the Church of En-
 gland, as it now is, has nothing to do with
 the Persecutions and Hardships the Dissenters
 suffer'd in King Charles's Days.

So that both Sides might easily be recon-
 ciled on these Accounts, if Care was not taken
 by

by the Weekly Enquiries of the Nation's Peace, continually to put People in mind of what they know nothing of, but by Hear, says, and consequently had no Hand in.

'Twas not long ago, since every honest Member Man, tho' never a strict Church-man, was branded with the Name of a King-killing Presbyterian, but 'tis an Happiness that all Times are now over, and we are blest with a Prince upon the Throne, who will not be wheedled to prostitute the Constitution so far, as to debar any of his loyal Subjects from the Rights and Privileges they may justly claim as Englishmen.

We may now reasonably hope, that all such foolish and wicked Distinctions will be wholly laid aside.— That every Englishman may enjoy his Birth-Right in common with the rest of his Fellow-Subjects, without respect to Parties, Persons, or Interests. All which, or any of which, in such Cases, ought not to be regarded; for the Question is not, *What Party such a Man is of?* But, *Whether he is an able, honest Man?* And I can't see any Reason why an honest Dissenter may not as soon be admitted to manage a Post of Honour and Profit, as one of the Church. For when all is said and done, it must be own'd, they have some honest Men among them, as well as the Church of England. But we are fully assured, or at least may be so, by late Experience, that Renegadoes of either Party, will never prove just to their Prince,

Prince, or faithful to their Country. They that can play fast and loose with their Creator, will never prove faithful to their Sovereign.

When once a Man forsakes his Religion, or his Manner of Profession, for a Place, he ought not to be trusted; but we should deal by him as the Spaniards do, give the poor Fellow a little Money, but never promote him; for, as they wisely say, *A Traitor may be Rewarded, but he never ought to be Trusted.*

Thus I have, as briefly as possible, gone through the grand *Remora's* that hinders the Nation's Peace; that obstruct the Spirit of Union and Love, that ought to reign in the Breast of every true *Englishman*.

As I have no Party-Designs in view, no Place of Profit, or Trust in my Eye, I hope my Countrymen will look upon me (as I really am) a Person wholly disinterested in the matter, and one who has no other Aim, but to contribute as much as possible to the healing those Differences which render us very contemptible Abroad, and unneighbourly to one another at Home.

Thus altho' we have hitherto been at Variance, let us now joyn Hands, come to a Ballance of Accounts, and set even one with another; for, we are now, or must of necessity be, *all of One Interest.* — For,

Woe, 'Tis

1st, 'Tis impossible for the *Dissenters* ever to erect a *Common-Wealth*. And,

2^{dly}, 'Tis impossible for the *Jacobites* ever to bring in the *Pretender* : So that you must unavoidably be content with this Government, or none at all. As for those that are not, if there be any such Mad-men, let them depart the Nation ; their Company is undesirable, and 'twould be an Happiness to get rid of them.

But to descend to further Particulars, by way of Proof of what I assert.

1st, 'Tis impossible for the *Dissenters* ever to erect themselves into a *Common-Wealth*.

The Noise of this imaginary Project is now at an end, and ridiculous it is to suppose any more of it. The House of *Hanover* are a fruitful Family, and we have Reason to Hope, will not be so soon extinct as some People would have them. They are a Family that will not be Brow-beaten by one Party, nor Bubbled by another.

But further, 'Tis impossible for the *Dissenters* ever to erect a *Common-Wealth*, and that for these Reasons :

1. The present Settlement of the Succession Bars them from effecting any such Design.

2. Their

2. *Their Nature, Temper, and Constitution, as English-men, makes them naturally in Love with Monarchy.*

3. *Their own Interest is directly against it.*

4. *The present Settlement of the Succession is an effectual Bar to the Dissenters from ever erecting a Common-Wealth.*

What low Spirits may be amongst them, and what weak Heads among them, may imagine or hope for, is nothing at all to the purpose; for whilst I am speaking of the *Dissenters*, I would be thought to mean the whole Body conjunctively.

As such, they cannot aim at a *Common-Wealth*, at least whilst the House of *Hanover* is in Being. And all I desire of such uneasy Gentlemen, who are resolv'd never to be quiet, is, to bear patiently till the Time comes when that Family shall be extinct, and then I am content to Argue further with them. But at present, 'tis sufficient to alledge the repeated Oaths they have taken to the present Illustrious House of *Brunswick*; tho' it may be some People may think, that the *Dissenters* may, or will break the most sacred Oaths at pleasure. To satisfy such, I shall only say this, that if they will find me out one *Dissenter* that has broke an Oath, I'll engage to produce as many Church-men that has broke Ten.

But

But this by the by ; and indeed it is a little out of the Way too, because I know no Body will accept my Challenge, tho' they throw in the business of *Forty-One*, to uphold their Cause. I shall now proceed to the Second.

2. *Their Nature, Temper, and Constitution, as English-men, makes them naturally in Love with Monarchy.*

'Tis the Nature of an *English-man* to be in love with that which is most for his Security, in regard to his Life, Liberty, and Property.

But the present Constitution of our Government, is exactly adapted to these great Ends.

Therefore every *English-man* is by Nature led to Love that, and no other Government whatsoever.

Now the main Question is, *Whether a Dissenter from the Establish'd Church, is an English-man, or not ?*

I have so much Charity for the Gentlemen who shall hereafter be my Opposers, as to imagine that they themselves will allow, that Conformity to a Church, or Nonconformity thereto, does not any ways add to, or diminish from his Birth as an *English-man*.

If the *Dissenters* are *English-men*, they must be in Love with Monarchy.

Not

Not but I know there is a common *Objection* lies in my way, and that is, the old *Story of Forty-One*. The *Dissenters*, say they, plainly prov'd by their ambitious Aims at that Time, that *Monarchy* was far from their Thoughts.

I must needs say, the *Dissenters*, as Men, are as subject to Frailty as the rest of their Fellow-Creatures; and what Ambition might lead designing Men to, was plainly evident at that Time.

For all Men wou'd be Emperors if they cou'd.

But if a modest Enquirer would give himself the liberty of an impartial Examination into this Affair, he wou'd soon be convinc'd that not one quarter-part of the *Dissenters* were engag'd in, or consented to that ridiculous Undertaking.

But to give my Opposers all the Length I can in point of Argument, I will for this once, suppose that the Generality, or whole Body of *Dissenters*, were consenting to the Subversion of *Monarchy*, at that Time. And what will my Antagonists infer from this? Why, all that can be said, is, They try'd to bring in another Method of Government, but grew weary of it so soon, that all Parties unanimously joyn'd to bring in the King; and how genteelly he Rewarded them for it, let History judge.

All

All which does but too plainly prove, that, as *Englishmen*, the *Dissenters* must be thought to be Lovers of *Monarchy*.

3. *The Interest of the Dissenters is directly opposite to the setting up a Common-Wealth.*

A Man may indeed run the Hazard of his Reputation, or put his Conscience at Stake, to carry on a *Party-Cause*, but I believe there is no Man would Hazard his Interest on that account. When once you come to touch his Interest, you lose your Man. Interest is so prevalent, that a great many Men hazard not only their Bodies, but their Souls to promote it.

Dissenters from the establish'd Church are divided into several *Sects* and *Divisions*, whose Opinions, in many Cases, are as different as their Faces. One of these *Sects* or *Divisions* (supposing there was a *Common-Wealth*) must be uppermost, that's certain; they could not all Reign, tho' perhaps their Ambition might be equal. Now I would fain know, which of the *Sects* would be the most prevalent, whether the *Presbyterian*, *Independant*, *Anabaptist*, or *Quaker*? And, after all, if one of these *Sects* were seated in the *Regency*, how long would they continue? We see already, they can't agree among themselves; they are continually falling out, tho' upon a Level, and you may easily guess how the Case would be, if one Party was to over-rule

the other. 'Tis therefore all a Jest to talk of the *Dissenters* being a *self-interested* People, and at the same time aver, they are for setting up a *Common-Wealth*, which is so directly contrary to it. But,

2. 'Tis impossible for the *Jacobites* ever to bring in the Pretender.

Our *Laws* will not allow of it; nor will the *Religion* we profess, suffer us to prostitute its *Purity* to that gross *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, which must of necessity follow. Besides, we have the Head of a Family now reigning, whose Offspring is before our Eyes, and whose glorious Atchievements will blast the Hopes of all Pretenders whatever.

Can any true *Englishman*, see such a glorious Turn of Affairs, and not adore the Divine Goodness, who has thus defeated the Designs of those who were Enemies to the Nation's Peace, by establishing a Prince on the Throne, whose Family is so numerous, whose Virtues are so conspicuous, and whose illustrious Progeny we behold with our Eyes?

And now having advanc'd thus far, there remains Two Arguments more; prevalent enough, I presume, to make us practise what has been already offer'd; viz.

1. A christian Consideration in respect to the Religion we profess.

2. A

2. *A moral Consideration in compliance to the Government we live under.*

1st, We ought from a christian Consideration to labour after the Continuance, and further Promotion of Peace among our selves, and that for Two Reasons :

First, Because it is the special and positive Command of the Gospel. And,

Secondly, Because it is a great Proof of the Reality of the Religion we profess.

1st, It is the special and positive Command of the Gospel, *Love one another; Love as Brethren.* Nay, 'tis the very Distinction of a true Christian from the Hypocrite, *to Love his Brother.* If a Man fails in this Duty, he cannot be Christ's Disciple : The whole Scripture abounds with Instruction of this kind. This is the great Charity, and Charity in the very Essence, *to Love one's Brother.*

And further; as all Churches, whether establish'd by humane Laws, or not, as well as any other Order or Society of Men, are liable to Errors, why may not the *Church of England* be something in the Wrong, as well as the *Dissenters*; and *vice versa* the *Dissenters* as well as the *Church*? So that altho' they may have some Difference in respect to the ceremonial Part of Worship, they ought not to fall out with one another, especially since those Ceremonies are allow'd by the Church her self, not to be altogether neces-

fary to Salvation. For certain it is, at the last Day, when all Flesh shall appear before God at the general *Audit*, the Question will not be whether I am a *Dissenter*, or a *Church-man*? whether *High*, or *Low*? But whether I have serv'd God according to the Dictates of my own Conscience, regulated by the Prescripts of *Holy Writ*? I say, regulated by those Precepts, because the Conscience of Man, as fallen, is erroneous. This will be the great Distinction at the last Day; how ridiculous then is it for us, who pretend to have our Faces Heaven-ward, to fall out by the Way, and hinder one another in our Journey to that celestial Place? 'Twas *Jacob's* Charge to his Sons, when they went down to *Egypt* to buy Corn for the Subsistence of their Families, *That they should not fall out by the Way*: The good old Man knew well enough the ill Consequences of *that*, and therefore timely provided against it by this prudent *Caution*. In like manner our Saviour, who plainly foresaw the variety of Sects that would arise in after Ages, still presses brotherly Love, and leaves to future Times an indelible Mark of a true Christian, *to Love the Brethren*. We are all Brethren as we are *Englishmen*, but we ought much more to think each other so, as we are Christians. Nature binds us to love one another, as being Born under the same Government, in the same Countrey and Climate, and invested with the same Privileges; how much more then should

should Christianity link us to one another in brotherly Kindness and Affection ?

2dly, We ought to endeavour after Peace among our selves, because it will be an Evidence to others, of the Reality of the Religion we profess.

Is it not matter of Shame to us *Protestants*, that such great *Idolaters* as the *Roman Catholics*, should, notwithstanding their superstitious manner of Worship, excel us in those chief Ornaments of Holy Religion, *Charity* and *brotherly Love* ? How justly may they think we deserve the Name of *Hereticks* and *Schismatics*, when we our selves are continually branding one another with the same Epithets ? If *Charity* and *brotherly Love* are Two of the chief Points we ought to practise, why do we not do it ? If they are not so, what means all those Injunctions of our Saviour and his Apostles ? Certainly a Man can never be a true Christian, that follows not the Example of Christ : And consequently that Religion which is not consonant to his Injunctions and Commands, cannot be the true Religion. If you have a mind to show your selves true Christians, practise this great Lesson of *brotherly Love*, and *Charity one towards another*. Then shall our Land flourish, and a Blessing from Heaven will follow all our Undertakings. Were this Duty but more enforc'd, and practis'd amongst us, we should soon see the Spirit of *Hypocrisy* visibly decreasing. For no Man that

that wants Charity, or is defective in *brotherly Love*, can be a true Christian. He may indeed be a bright Professor ; he may go a great Length in the outward Forms of Religion ; he may be an excellent Orator, a florid Preacher ; nay, he may convert many to Righteousness, but he can never be a true Christian himself, unless he has learnt this Lesson of *Charity, and brotherly Love*.

2. We ought to make it our chief Endeavour to promote Peace and Union amongst our selves, from a moral Consideration in reference to the Government we live under.

There is nothing can make the *British* Nation more Formidable and Powerful abroad, and more respected at foreign Courts, than Unanimity among our selves.

Can any one imagine, that so weak a Person as the *Pretender*, wou'd have dar'd to threaten us with an *Invasion*, had he not been encourag'd by our *Divisions* ? Wou'd he have bully'd us to our Faces with *Lifting of Men, Hiring Ships*, and the like, if our own *Disturbances* had not been the only Handle he cou'd take hold of, in order to carry on his ridiculous Undertakings ? But God be prais'd, his Designs will be wholly blasted, if we now make use of that Opportunity put into our Hands, of *Uniting at Home*.

Let

Let us not slip so happy a Juncture, but receive the Blessing into our Hearts, which is the only way to make our Sovereign sit easy on the Throne, and our selves happy under his Government.

'Twill give such a Lustre to his Crown, and redound so much to the Honour of the *British Name*, that our *Enemies* will Fear and Tremble, and our *Friends* and *Allies* revive and lift up their Heads with Joy, to behold our Happiness, and consequently in that, their own Safety.

There is nothing but this *Political Peace*, this Peace at Home, can retrieve our antient Glory and Honour; there is nothing but this can revive the sinking Spirits of our Friends abroad, and secure us for the Time to come, from the Threats of all *Invaders* whatsoever.

Where Glory, Honour, and Interest are concern'd, one would think there should be no need of Arguments to enforce a Duty so beneficial, whereby every Body will be Gainers, and none Losers.

Then will our Trade flourish, when we shall be able to hold it's Ballance, as well as that of Power, in our own Hands, in opposition to foreign Nations.

Therefore let me once for all, advise my Country-men, to *forget* and *forgive* all past Miscarriages; to lay aside all Differences, and, for the future, suffer no other Distinctions to be heard amongst us, but who shall
 shew

show themselves the most Loyal and Faithful
Subjects of his present Majesty King George
Then shall our Posterity have Reason to bless
our Memories, and future Ages will with
Joy reap the glorious Benefits of that Peace
and Union, of which we shall be the happy
Founders.

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